

**Statement of  
Garry Henry  
1284 US Hwy 31  
Hope Hull, AL 36043**

**Before the  
House Agriculture Committee  
Auburn, AL  
February 7, 2006**

I am Garry Henry and I am happy to appear on behalf of the Cattle Producers and the Alabama Farmers Federation Beef Committee. My family and I have a fourteen hundred head cow/calf operation in Montgomery. With the fourth generation joining the operation last year, we have a keen interest in the future of agriculture. The 2002 Farm Bill has generally had a positive effect on agriculture in our area but there are a few areas of concern.

The first I would like to talk about is the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The Alabama Farmers Federation supports the objectives of CRP but feel in some ways that the implementation has exceeded the original goal of taking highly-erodible land out of production. Although CRP has positive benefits such as reducing soil erosion and converting marginal land into wildlife habitat, it has taken productive land that was not highly erodible and converted it into idled land. This has had the effect of creating rental rates at levels that do not represent the market rate for the local area and made it impossible for farmers to compete for its use. Young farmers in particular are not able to find land to with which to operate. And with the lack of agricultural activity, farming communities are dying.

A solution would be to modify rental rates, and create more stringent requirements for renewal or entry into the program. As the chart included in my testimony shows, there is a

significant amount of acreage that that will be coming out of CRP in the next several years. That acreage can be used for forage production or production of biomass thus stimulating rural economy.

I would like to thank members of this Committee for their efforts to resume trade of beef after the BSE case and also support of the Alabama Beef Connection. In connection with those issues, the Alabama Farmers Federation supports a mandatory animal ID system. With an effective ID system, it would create an even safer food supply for consumers, and would allow producers to meet consumer demands for traceability. I understand that recent USDA has announced it is unsure it has the legal authority to require producers to register with a private database. The Alabama Farmers Federation supports USDA's stated goal of achieving an operational and mandatory reporting system by 2008 and would ask the Committee to give USDA whatever legal authority it needs to achieve this mandatory participation or alternatively make it a federal database with appropriate producer confidentiality protection.

The Alabama Farmers Federation supports mandatory Country of Origin labeling and believes that consumers have the right to know where their food is grown. We believe that this is the best way to promote branded and preserved-identity foods to consumers. The current farm bill requirement to implement mandatory COOL has been postponed several times with the exception of seafood. We see no reason for this delay to continue since the food industry has had adequate time to prepare for mandatory COOL. We import over eighty percent of our seafood, and the labeling requirement for seafood has worked well with a minimum of disruption.

I was pleased to see that the President in his State of the Union focused on alternative fuels. I commend Congress for passing an energy bill that does have a renewable fuels component but more needs to be done. High energy costs are driving a renewed interest in

alternative fuels and not just for traditional ethanol. Congress should support incentives to expand the production of ethanol, biodiesel, and other energy sources such as those manufactured from animal waste. The Farm bill has a bio-energy and value-added component and this should be expanded to continue funding needed for alternative fuel sources related to agriculture production. In addition to providing renewable energy, another positive from the ethanol and biodiesel industry is that the byproducts make excellent high-protein livestock feed.

As the Committee considers the reauthorization of the farm bill, please keep in mind that no matter what form the farm programs take the farmer must remain profitable. The current farm bill should be continued with only minor changes, and the budget funding contained in the farm bill should not be reduced.

I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

**CRP Acreage Expiring through September 30, 2008 in 13 Black Belt Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Active Acres</b>	<b>Exp. 2005</b>	<b>Exp. 2006</b>	<b>Exp. 2007</b>	<b>Exp. 2008</b>
<b>Bullock</b>	9,942.30	64.30	66.90	4,130.90	1,357.20
<b>Dallas</b>	26,808.90	410.00	19.50	15,511.20	2,598.10
<b>Greene</b>	12,635.60	1,020.00	0.00	7,753.50	662.30
<b>Hale</b>	10,888.80	0.00	0.00	8,944.60	611.70
<b>Lowndes</b>	13,151.20	0.00	0.00	8,433.50	1,148.30
<b>Macon</b>	12,443.60	62.60	0.00	7,653.80	1,556.50
<b>Marengo</b>	23,149.90	1,581.10	49.90	14,057.60	2,996.80
<b>Montgomery</b>	14,506.10	0.00	0.00	10,984.80	1,085.20
<b>Perry</b>	20,252.20	713.80	324.20	14,951.10	645.00
<b>Pickens</b>	7,335.50	125.80	0.00	3,304.00	144.60
<b>Russell</b>	8,691.90	0.00	0.00	4,382.80	945.00
<b>Sumter</b>	20,906.20	691.70	137.70	12,150.30	617.20
<b>Wilcox</b>	13,463.80	228.10	36.70	7,237.00	0.00
	<b><u>194,176.00</u></b>	<b><u>4,897.40</u></b>	<b><u>634.90</u></b>	<b><u>119,495.10</u></b>	<b><u>14,367.90</u></b>

**Total Acreage Expiring by 2008****139,395.30**

Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Information Required From Non-governmental Witnesses

House rules require non-governmental witnesses to provide their resume or biographical sketch prior to testifying. If you do not have a resume or biographical sketch available, please complete this form.

1. Name: Garry Henry
2. Business Address: 12874 U.S. Hwy 31  
Hope Hull AL 36043
3. Business Phone Number: 334 850-1423
4. Organization you represent: Alabama Farmers Federation
5. Please list any occupational, employment, or work-related experience you have which add to your qualification to provide testimony before the Committee:  
Former Dairy Producer  
Life long cattle farmer
6. Please list any special training, education, or professional experience you have which add to your qualifications to provide testimony before the Committee:  
Presented testimony in Washington DC on behalf  
of dairy producers in Alabama  
Local board member of First South Farm Credit
7. If you are appearing on behalf of an organization, please list the capacity in which you are representing that organization, including any offices or elected positions you held:  
Member of the Beef Committee of Ala. Farmers  
Federation

PLEASE ATTACH THIS FORM OR YOUR BIOGRAPHY TO EACH COPY OF TESTIMONY.

Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Required Witness Disclosure Form

House Rules\* require nongovernmental witnesses to disclose the amount and source of Federal grants received since October 1, 2004.

Name: Garry Henry  
Address: 12874 U.S. Hwy 31 Hope Hull AL 36043  
Telephone: 334 288-8407  
Organization you represent (if any): Alabama Farmers Federation  
Beef Committee

1. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants and subcontracts) you have received since October 1, 2004, as well as the source and the amount of each grant or contract. House Rules do **NOT** require disclosure of federal payments to individuals, such as Social Security or Medicare benefits, farm program payments, or assistance to agricultural producers:

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

2. If you are appearing on behalf of an organization, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants and subcontracts) the organization has received since October 1, 2004, as well as the source and the amount of each grant or contract:

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check here if this form is NOT applicable to you:

☒

Signature: Garry Henry

\* Rule XI, clause 2(g)(4) of the U.S. House of Representatives provides: Each committee shall, to the greatest extent practicable, require witnesses who appear before it to submit in advance written statements of proposed testimony and to limit their initial presentations to the committee to brief summaries thereof. In the case of a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source (by agency and program) of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) received during the current fiscal year or either of the two previous fiscal years by the witness or by any entity represented by the witness.

PLEASE ATTACH DISCLOSURE FORM TO EACH COPY OF TESTIMONY.